

Co-chairs Senator McCrory and Representative Currey, Ranking Members Representative McCarty and Representative Berthel, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

My name is Katherine Villeda and I am a resident of Bridgeport, Connecticut. I am testifying in support of S.B. 1095: An Act Concerning School Resource Officers.

All students deserve to feel safe, secure, and supported in their places of learning. Yet too often our schools rely on policing to keep children in line, rather than funding professionals trained to deliver students necessary developmental and behavioral health resources.

I remember when I was in high school we suddenly had an SRO and recall their presence making me feel like at any moment any of our actions could criminalize me and my peers; as if we were destined to eventually get ourselves in trouble. No child should have to deal with those thoughts.

According to research by [Connecticut Voices for Children](#), there's no evidence School Resource Officers (SROs) make students or staff safer, but schools with SROs have more arrests and more expulsions than their peer institutions without SROs.

I strongly support S.B. 1095. I hope the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers will vote in favor of this bill. Together, we can build an educational system that centers the social-emotional wellbeing of students through care, resources, learning, and restoration.

Thank you for your time,
Katherine Villeda